

MONTANA'S SPECIALTY CROP BLOCK GRANT

Helping Montana's specialty crop
producers

BROUGHT TO YOU BY



MISSION STATEMENT

- ▶ The mission of the Montana Department of Agriculture (MDA) is to protect producers and consumers, and to enhance and develop agriculture and allied industries.

How does this work? What is eligible?

INTRODUCTION

SPECIALTY CROP PROGRAM

- ▶ Solely to enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops in Montana.

ELIGIBILITY

▶ Entities:

- ▶ Non-Profit and For-Profit
 - ▶ State and local organizations
 - ▶ Producers Associations
 - ▶ Community-based organizations
 - ▶ Other specialty crop stakeholders
- ▶ Local, State, Federal and Tribal Governments
- ▶ Colleges and Universities

- ▶ Funds **cannot** benefit a single organization, institution, or individual.

DEFINITION

- ▶ Defined by USDA
- ▶ Specifically:
 - ▶ Fruits
 - ▶ Vegetables
 - ▶ Dried fruits
 - ▶ Horticulture
 - ▶ Nursery crops (including floriculture)
- ▶ Must be:
 - ▶ intensively cultivated
 - ▶ used **by people** for food, medicinal purposes, and/or aesthetic gratification
 - ▶ Processed products shall constitute greater than 50% of the specialty crop by weight, exclusive of added water.

ELIGIBLE MONTANA CROPS

- ▶ **Not a complete list.**
- ▶ **Fruits:** apples, cherries, peaches, etc.
- ▶ **Vegetables:** tomatoes, lettuce, potatoes, etc.
- ▶ Pulse crops and legumes
- ▶ Culinary Herbs and Spices
- ▶ Medicinal Herbs
- ▶ Nursery, Floriculture, and Horticulture Crops
 - ▶ Horticulture: Honey, Hops, Turfgrass
 - ▶ Annual Bedding Plants: Flowers and vegetables
 - ▶ Foliage Plants
 - ▶ Trees
- ▶ ***Value-added processing of eligible crops also qualifies**

INELIGIBLE MONTANA CROPS

- ▶ **Not a complete list.**

- ▶ Alfalfa
- ▶ Barley
- ▶ Buckwheat
- ▶ Canola
- ▶ Canola Oil
- ▶ Dairy products
- ▶ Eggs
- ▶ Flax

- ▶ Hay
- ▶ Livestock products
- ▶ Millet
- ▶ Oats
- ▶ Quinoa
- ▶ Range grasses
- ▶ Safflower
- ▶ Soybeans
- ▶ Sugar beets
- ▶ Triticale
- ▶ Wheat

FOR A COMPLETE LIST

- ▶ Visit <http://www.ams.usda.gov/scbgp>
- ▶ Click on “What are Specialty Crops?”

ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

- ▶ Enhancing food safety.
- ▶ Assisting all entities in the specialty crop distribution chain in developing “Good Agricultural Practices,” “Good Handling Practices,” “Good Manufacturing Practices,” and in cost share arrangements for funding audits of such systems for small farmers; packers and processors.
- ▶ Investing in specialty crop research, including research to focus on conservation and environmental outcomes.

ELIGIBLE PROJECTS CONTINUED

- ▶ Developing new and improved seed varieties and specialty crops;
- ▶ Pest and disease control; and development of organic and sustainable production practices.
- ▶ Increasing child and adult nutrition knowledge and consumption of specialty crops;
- ▶ Improving efficiency and reducing costs of distribution systems.
- ▶ Developing local and regional food systems;.
- ▶ Improving food access in underserved communities.

PRIORITIES

FARMER EDUCATION

► **Providing Farmer Education on Specialty Crop:**

- Farm to institution practices
- Value-added production
- Disease and pest management
- Farm and food safety
- Commercial seed production
- Organic and non-organic food production

RESEARCH

▶ **Supporting Research in the areas of Specialty Crop:**

- ▶ Disease and pest management
- ▶ Variety testing and selection
- ▶ Organic and non-organic food production

INFRASTRUCTURE

▶ **Adding Infrastructure that creates or supports Specialty Crop:**

- ▶ Storage
- ▶ Processing
- ▶ Farm to institute
- ▶ Pest management assistance for farmers

ADDITIONALLY

- ▶ **Increasing Consumer Awareness of the Value of Specialty Crops through Education**
- ▶ **Representing a Geographic Diversity of Projects Across the State**

Where does it com from? How much is there?

FUNDING

FUNDING

- ▶ USDA's Farm Bill



- ▶ These are federal pass-through grants

FUNDING AVAILABLE

- ▶ No announcement has been made regarding the federal funding available for this competition.
- ▶ We anticipate funding similar to last year's allocation of \$986,229.53.
- ▶ Base Grant = Value of specialty crop production

How to apply? What is required?

GRANT PROPOSALS

TIMELINE

- ▶ Grant Proposal
 - ▶ **February 16, 2015:** Invitation to Submit Grant Proposals
 - ▶ **April 8, 2015:** Grant Proposals Due
 - ▶ **July 2015:** Grant Proposals to USDA for Approval
- ▶ Award
 - ▶ **October 2015:** Announce & Award Funding

WEBGRANTS

- ▶ Applications must be submitted through fundingmt.org
- ▶ Instructions on getting started are on the SCBG webpage

PROPOSAL HELP

Grant Proposal Manual

- ▶ Instructions on each section of the proposal
- ▶ Check here first.
 - ▶ It won't answer everything,

Sample Application and Budget Development Worksheet

- ▶ Guides on completing your application
- ▶ **USE THIS!** It will help you develop your application before you use webgrants.

MORE HELP

- ▶ Submit Questions via the Webgrants system
- ▶ Submit questions to jauer@mt.gov
- ▶ Call 406-444-5424
- ▶ We will maintain an FAQ on the website and in Webgrants with submitted questions

PROPOSAL CONTENTS

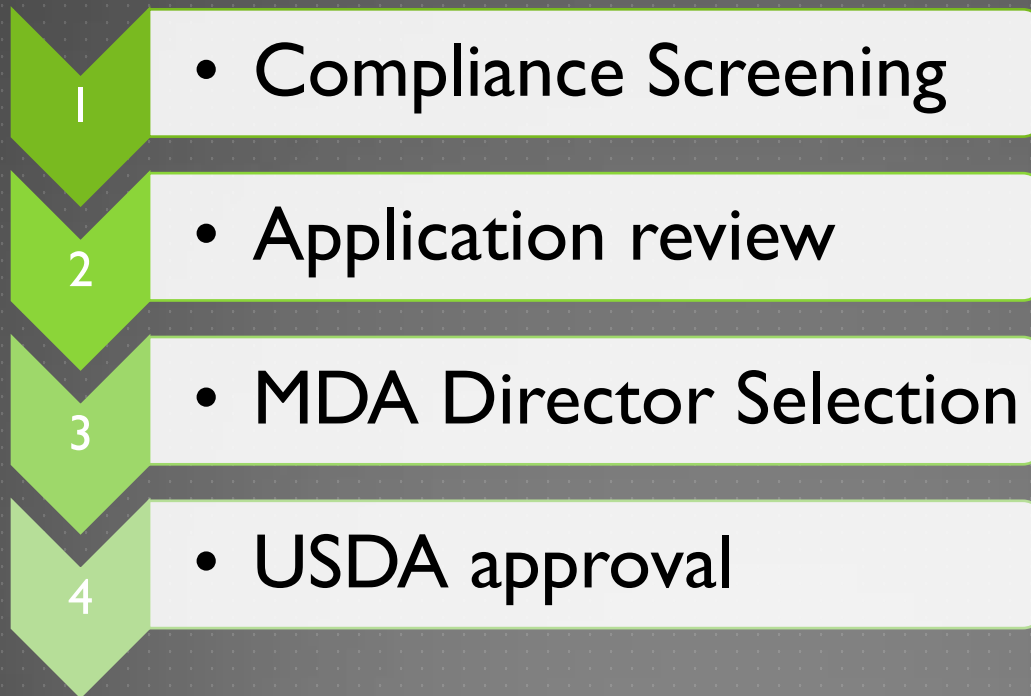
- ▶ Cover sheet
- ▶ Narrative
- ▶ Outcome Measures
- ▶ Project Support
- ▶ Budget
- ▶ Project Funding
- ▶ We are currently accepting applications through FundingMT.org

How are proposals reviewed? What makes for strong proposals?

PROPOSAL REVIEW

PROCESS

► Competitive grant proposal process



An application must pass all these steps to be funded.

PROJECT EXAMPLES

Acceptable

- ▶ A university requests funds to conduct research on the feasibility of planting, cultivating, and growing a specialty crop in a particular area, the results of which will be shared with many growers throughout the State during the project.

Not Acceptable

- ▶ A single specialty crop organization requests grant funds to market its organization so that it can increase membership in the organization.

PROJECT EXAMPLES

Acceptable

- ▶ A single grower requests funds to demonstrate the viability of organic small fruit production and partners with Cooperative Extension to publicize the working model of diversification to other regional growers.

Not Acceptable

- ▶ An entity requests grant funds to make grants to individual specialty crop businesses or roadside stands to promote their individual business.

PROJECT EXAMPLES

Acceptable

- ▶ A single non-profit organization requests funds to conduct an advertising campaign that will benefit their specialty crop members.

Not Acceptable

- ▶ A non-profit organization uses grant funds to purchase produce and then sells that produce to other entities at cost or a higher price than the purchase price while competing with other private companies who sell produce in the area.

PROJECT EXAMPLES

Acceptable

- ▶ A single farmer erects high tunnels on his/her property to extend the growing season of tomatoes and lettuce and conducts a field day and farm tour to encourage other small family farmers to adopt the production methods.

Not Acceptable

- ▶ A sole proprietor requests grant funds to redesign her/his logo in order to make her/his specialty crop value-added product stand out at the local farmers' market.

CONTACT

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agr.mt.gov/agr/Programs/Development/GrantsLoans/SCBG

QUESTIONS?

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

- ▶ March 10, 1:00 PM MST

- ▶ Specialty Crop Block Grant Compliance
<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/181994533>
- ▶ Toll Free 1 866 899 4679
- ▶ Access Code: 181-994-533

- ▶ April 1, 10:00 AM MST

- ▶ Applying in Webgrants <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/681296021>
- ▶ Toll Free 1 877 309 2073
- ▶ Access Code 681-296-021